The Caledonian Mercury.

Edinburgh, Wednesday, December 14, 1726.

Edinburgh, Decem. 13. Yesterday the following Proclamation was read over the Cross, with the usual Formality.

By the KING.

A PROCLAMATION.

GEORGE R.

WHereas Our Parliament stands prorogu'd to Thursday the Eighth Day of *December* next, We, with the Advice of Our Privy-Council, do hereby Publish and Declare, That the said Parliament shall, on the said Eighth Day of *December* next, be further Prorogu'd to Tuesday the Seventeenth Day of *January* next ensuing the Date hereof, to be then held at Westminster. And We have given Orders to Our Chancellor of Great Britain to prepare a Commission for Proroguing the same accordingly. And We do hereby further Declare Our Pleasure, that the said Parliament shall, on the said Seventeenth Day of *January* next, be held and sit for the Dispatch of several weighty and important Affairs. And the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and the Knights, Citizens and Burgesses, and Commissioners of Shires and Burghs of the House of Commons, are hereby Required and Commanded to give their Attendance accordingly at Westminster on the said Seventeenth Day of *January* next.

Given at Our Court at Kensington, the 29th of *November*, 1726. And in the 13th Year of Our Reign.

God save the KING.

From Miſt's Weekly Journal, - - - -

I Remember last Summer when it was given out that a Subscription was promoted here for raising a Sum of Money, in order to bring a Troop of Comedians from *Italy* to entertain this Town with *Italian* Comedy, I was unwilling to believe the Report.

My Incredulity was owing to my having been a little conversant with the Writings of other Nations, and knowing, that of all the Moderns, the *Italians* were the People who least understood, and had least cultivated Dramatick Poetry. I had observed too, that this effeminate and luxurious People being enchanted as it were with the Charms of Musick, had made it their chief Study to improve that Science, as a Diversion most suteable to their indolent Genius, at which a Man may sit till his Senses are all lull'd into a State of Inaction, and where the Mind can have no Share of the Entertainment.

Whatever the Reasons may be against their Encouragement, we find they are arrived, and whenever they play, there is such a Hurry of fine Equipages crowding to the Doors, as might raise a Man's Expectation to look for something very polite in the Entertainment.

I confess, I've had the Curiosity to visit them as often as they have play'd, and after the first Time my chief Amusement has been in considering the Auditory, for I did not believe before, that there was in *London* so great a Number of well dress'd People, who did not understand a Word of *English*.

It is true I did not personally know them all to be *Foreigners*, but I was willing so far to compliment their Understandings, as to persuade my self, that if they had the least Notion of our Language, I should not have seen them at this Theatre, and these poor Strangers would have been left to act to bare Benches, and the Ecchoes of their own Voices.

By this the Reader will imagine I have no great Relish for their Entertainments, which I frankly own, wherefore I shall give a short Description of their Nature, and let the publick judge how far they ought to be encouraged by a sensible People.

But first it will not be amiss to say something of Comedy in general. Comedy is the Image and Representation of human Life, Father *Rapin* says, the Aim and Design of Comedy is (by ridiculing the Follies and Vices of particular Men) to reform those of the Publick; thus its Characters must all be drawn from Nature: The Miser must be there described with all his penurious Wits of Saving: The Bully must be shewn to be a Coward: The Puritan a Cheat: The Cocquet a vain inconstant Thing;

Thing, who loves nothing, and places all her Glory in making Conquests; and, in fine, all the Deformities which proceed from Affectation, must be there expoled.

Thus the Theatre is as it were the School of the People, where we learn to correct our Follies thro' the fear of being ridiculed; but it must be observed, that it cannot correct without pleasing at the same Time, for it is the Diversion which the People expect to find, which draws them to the Theatre to be instructed; it is therefore the ancient Writers very judiciously made *Delight* to be one of the Ends of Comedy. To which Purpose the Characters must be supported with Wit and Humour, and Care must be taken to avoid being feint and langnid on one Side, or running into Buffoonry on the other; there must be a Design and Plot in the Fable, abounding with Incidents at once natural and surprizing. All which will require a fine Imagination and a most excellent Judgment in the Plot.

Such Comedy ought to be, to make its Diversion worthy of a sensible and ingenious People. That we have in our own Language many Comedies with most of these Excellencies, and some with them all, might be easily proved, if we had Room. But it is Time to pass to the Comedy of the *Italians*.

We conceive these Pieces represented by the *Italian* Theatre, cannot deserve the Name of a Comedy: First, because there is nothing in any of them which looks like a Plan or Fable regularly conducted; their Characters are imperfect and inconsistent with themselves, and no way kept up; they want Variety. The Personages they bring upon the Stage, are the same in every Representation; and these are: A miserable *Doctor*, who is to be as foolish as the Actor can possibly make him; two *dancing Lovers*, a *Pantaloon*, who is commonly the Father of one of these Lovers; a *Harlequin*, who is for the most part a Valet, and the Buffoon of the Farce, and sometimes a *Metzetein* and *Scaramouch*, by way of *Zanis*.

'Tis true *Harlequin* sometimes appears in different Shapes; but whether he assumes the Character of a Roman Emperor, or a French Dancing-master, he must be always a Buffoon.

Their Discourse is a kind *ex tempore* Dialogue; for as every Actor is instructed in the Business of the Scene he is to say what he thinks proper upon the Subject; and their common Way is, to talk on till Harlequin puts an End to the Discourse by beating them off, and so they end every Scene.

They have no Notion of Raillery, and those delicate Turns of Wit which may be read in *French* and *Spanish* Comedies, and many of our own. But as their Drolls in Italy (for I can call them no better) are mostly the Entertainment of Gondaliers, Fishwomen, and other the basest of the People, to whom a nasty Expression has sometimes the Effect of Wit, they are apt to comply with the vicious Taste of their Audience, and launch out into what they call *Cuglionerie*, a Word which it would not be very modest to translate.

If it be asked, what do they do divert? It must be known, the great Machine of Wit in all their Entertainments is Harlequin's Woodden Sword; and whenever the Mirth of the Company begins to flag, Harlequin takes Care to raise it again by exercising his Weapon upon the Prince, or Lover, or the embroidered Gentleman of the Play, the drubbing of whom about the Stage never fails of having a good Effect.

There are other Arts practised for giving a Spirit to the Scene, which are to be used according to the Humour and Judgment of Harlequin, such as making Allusion by Word or Gesture to the Posterior of *Pantaloon* or the *Doctor*; and if they happen to turn their Backs towards the Audience, his lifting up their Garments, and applying his Wooden Sword to these Parts with a great deal of Smartness and Force, does not a little improve the Wit and Humour of this kind of Comedy.

I shall say but little of the Doctor's Whiskers, or *Pantaloon*'s picked Beard, without which, *Harlequin* could not be near so witty as he sometimes is; and tho' some may look upon them as of no Use, yet they are certainly Traps of Wit; for whenever *Harlequin* lays hold of these Emblemes of Gravity, and leads them round the Stage by the Face, what with *Pantaloon*'s Cry and the Doctor's Squeak, it is look't upon as a pleasant Incident. His moving the Chairs from behind them, and throwing them down, is also a constant Jest.

This, I say, is the *Italian* Comedy, and whosoever frequents these Entertainments, will see the same Tricks plaid over in every Representation, withoutout any Mixture of Wit, Humour or good Sense, to make him amends.

It gives a Man a most deplorable Prospect of the present Degeneracy of Taste, and the miserable Decay of common Sense amongst our People of sudden Fortunes, who I find are the Encouragers of

these

these Entertainments. What can we say but that Barbarism and Ignorance have driven Wit from the Stage. The bad Effects of this may be easily foreseen; for no Doubt the Stage has a great Influence upon the Minds of the People: It is, or ought to be the School of Politeness and good Breeding; for we know by Experience, that the Youth do form themselves by what they see there, and receive Notions of Conversation and Behaviour by the Examples there represented. I'd fain know, what can be learned at these *Italian* Entertainments? A young Fellow, indeed, may learn with a good Assurance to shew his Backside, and think it a Piece of Wit to let his his Shirt hang out of his Breeches behind; and since *Harlequin* began it the first Night, perhaps it may grow into a Mode among the Courtiers; and if they wear them long, perhaps they may *a la mode de Harlequin*, have Pages to hold them up behind: And the Ladies too may come to find out a Way of imitating the Mode; I mean such as are fond of Masculine Airs, and are to be seen in *Hide Park* half dressed like Jockeys and Postillions.

According to the present Prevalence of Taste, this can be no extravagant Supposition; for when all Delicacy and good Sense are laid aside, who can know how far an Absurdity may carry one?

Mr. MIST,

MY Curiosity led me last *Sunday* to a Presbyterian Oratory, and having never before visited those kind of Conventicles, I gave the greatest Attention to the worthy Orator: His Subject was upon the Love of God; a Matter, though sublime and grand, was display'd with notable Insufficiency, and his low and jejune Similes, or at least, his Words designed for such; I shall single out one, which gives me some doubt. The Orators Words were, That the Love of God was great, that it exceeded not only the Love of Man, but even the Love of Woman, which, said he, is stronger than that of Man. At first I thought he made Use of that Comparison, in Compliance with his Audience, who were most Females; but finding he insisted very much on this Comparison, I began to think he had been really sincere in that Opinion, and taking my own Sex to have the Superiority in that generous Passion of the Mind, and that we were nearer the Similitude of God; I resolved to know your Opinion in the Matter, which I hope in your next you'll insert.

There is another *Quare* I beg Leave to put, and that is, Whether the same Authority that obliges our Orthodox to have their Sermons wrote, does not extend to those Gentlemen, who harangue in those Meetings, for I remarked that this Orator had not any Paper before him. Sir, if you think this worthy to be inserted in your Journal, and are at Leisure to answer the *Queries*, you will much oblige

Your constant Reader,
and Admirer,
PHILOCLES.

Edinburgh, Dec. 14. Mr. Honneyman of Graemsay Stewart Depute of Orkney, having been accused as Art and Part in Captain Moodie's Murder, and Malverse in his Office, by Captain Moodie's Relict, was Yesterday Honourably acquit at the Bar of Justiciary, there being no real Proof adduced against him.

N. B. The Post which was expected on Sunday-morning last, having not arrived at 3 a-clock this Afternoon 'tis very much fear'd he may have perished in the Snow on the Road.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

Fishery-Office, Decem. 13. 1726.

The MANAGERS of the Fishing-Copartnery give Notice, That they are to expose to Sale by publick Roup, at their Office in the Lawn-market of Edinburgh, upon the 31st Day of January next, at 3 after Noon, the Copartnery's LANDS of Peterhead, and some FEUS and FISH-BOATS in Stonehaven. The Rental and Conditions of Sale to be seen at the Copartnery's Office.

*** The Lands and Estate of PHALP, Upper and Nether Phalp, with the Teinds thereof, lying in the Parish of Etrick, Regality of Melrose and Sheriffdom of *Selkirk*; are to be sold by voluntary Disposition. Any who have a mind to purchase, may enquire for Alexander Mitchel Writer to the Signet, at his Writing-chamber in Warifton's Close, above Dalrymple's Office, who will show them the Progress of Writs, and common with them on the Bargain.

¶¶ *That the Lands and Baronies of* LOUNAN, ÆTHIE, *and* NORTHTARRIE, *to be set up at* TWENTY *Years Purchase, and reckoning the Victual* over-head at Five Pounds Scots the Boll: *are to be exposed to Roup and Sale on* Fridaday the Sixteenth Day of December Inst. *at three of the Clock in the Afternoon, in the House of Alexander Stuart Vintner in Edinburgh, either separately*

retely or altogether, as shall be determined at the Time of the Sale; and whereof the free Rent is as follows, viz. Of the Lands and Barony of Lounan, 3 *Firlots, one Peck Wheat*; 77 *Bolls* 1 *Firlot*, 2 *Pecks Bear*; 172 *Bolls Meal*; 633 *L.* 6 *sh.* 8 *d Scots of Money-Rent*; 24 *Capons*; *beside* 156 *Poultry, not valued in the Rental. Of the Lands and Barony of* Æthie, 3 *Bolls Wheat*, 86 *Bolls Bear*, 119 *Bolls*, 2 *Firlots Meal*, 519 *L.* 13 *sh.* 4 *d. Scots of Money-Rent*, 9 *Wedders*, 21 *Capons*, 78 *Elns of Linen Cloath, besides* 99 *Poultry, not valued in the Rental, And of the Lands and Barony of* Northtarrie, 172 *Bolls*, 1 *Peck*, 2 *Lippies Bear*, 69 *Bolls*, 2 *Firlots Meal*; 262 *L.* 5 *sh.* 4 *d. Scots of Money-rent*, 16 *Capons*, 9 *Elns of Linen cloth beside* 15 *Poultrey, not valued in the Rental. All the saids Lands, holding Blanch of the Crown, and lying upon the Sea coast, near and about the Burgh of Aberbrothock; and the particular Rentals, Conditions of Sale, and Progress of the Writs, are to be seen in the Hands of William Mercer Writer in Edinburgh.*

N.B. *In our last, by Mistake, the above Lands were said to be put up at* 21 *Years Purchase, instead of* 20.

¶¶¶ There is to be exposed to voluntar Roup and Sale, on Thursday the 15th of December 1726, in the House of Patrick Herdman Vintner, betwixt the Hours of 3 & 4 after Noon, the Town and Lands of CRAIGLOCKHART, Tower, Fortalice, Mannor-place, Houses, Biggings, Yards and Pertinents thereto belonging; being a good fertile Soil, pleasantly situate, having large Conveniency for Pasturage on the Hills belonging thereto; with the Houses and Stone-Quarrey pertaining to the same in Sclateford. There is a large handsome House two Storey high, lately built on the said Lands, possessed by the Tenant, besides several other Conveniencies; such as a Brewary possessed by a Sub-tenant, a convenient Seat in the Church, and the like; lying about two Miles West from Edinburgh, in the Sheriffdom thereof, Parish of Hails, alias Colington. The Lands hold Blanche of the Crown. The Rental, Conditions of Roup, and Rights, are to be seen in the Hands of *Thomas Johnston* Writer in Edinburgh, in Mr. Alison of Birkhill's Writing-chamber in Carrubber's Close, on the North-side of the Street, above the Bishop's Land.

¶ That on the 22d Day of December *Inst.* betwixt the Hours of two and four in the Afternoon, in the House of Mris. Don Vintner in Edinburgh, there is to be sold by publick voluntary Roup, the Lands of Laghall, Netherton, Boigs, Priestlands, Redbrae, Woodhead and Miln Armannoch and Marchronnie, with a Salmond Fishing on the Water of Nith, paying 107 *L.* 6 *sh.* 8 *d.* Sterl. of Yearly free Rent, beside Kains and Casualities, holden of the Crown Taxtward, lying within a Mile or thereby of the Burgh of Dumfries, the greatest Part thereof betwixt the Waters of Nith and Crirgin, in the Parish of Troquire and Stewartry of Kircudbright. The Progress of the Writs with the Rental and Conditions of Sale, to be seen in the Hands of Thomas Goldie Writer to the Signet at his Writing Chamber in Edinburgh.

§¶§ The DIRECTORS of the BANK of SCOTLAND having certain Knowledge, that some wicked and malicious Person or Persons have been and are endeavouring to Counterfeit the Company's Twenty-shilling Notes, and to impose them upon innocent and honest Persons: These are therefore to desire all Persons to whom any Twenty-shilling Notes shall be presented, to look if the Words *BANK OF SCOTLAND* be in the Paper in it's proper Place, *above* the Treasurer's Subscription; but in case they observe the said Words be stampt on the *Back side* of the Note, and not to have been done originally with the Paper itself, they are not to receive the same; but to take special Notice and Knowledge of the Person who offers such Note, and to discover the same to the Treasurer of the Bank. And the DIRECTORS hereby faithfully promise to give a Reward of *One Hundred Pound Sterling* to any who shall discover and cause apprehend any Person guilty of or accessory to the said Forgery, so as he may be brought to condign Punishment, and the Discoverer's Name shall be concealed. This by Order of the COURT OF DIRECTORS. Signed by me. DAVID SPENCE Secretary.

EDINBURGH: Printed for Mr. *William Rolland*, by Mr. *Thomas Ruddiman*. Sold at the Printing-house in *Morocco*'s Close and at Mr. *Alexander Symmers*'s Shop in the Parliament-Close. At both which Places *Advertisements* and *Subscriptions* are taken in.